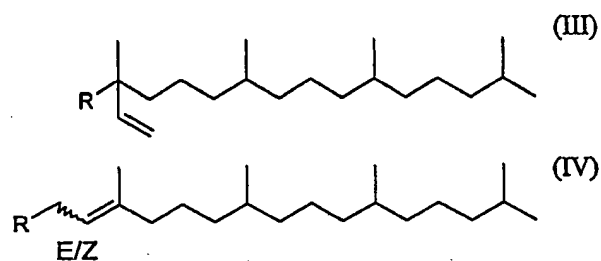


### ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

The present invention is concerned with a novel process for the manufacture of  $\alpha$ -tocopheryl acetate which comprises reacting 2,3,6-trimethylhydroquinone-1-acetate with a compound selected from the group consisting of phytol (formula IV with R = OH), iso-phytol (formula III with R = OH), and (iso) phytol derivatives represented by the following formulae III and IV with R = C<sub>2</sub>-to C<sub>5</sub>-alkonoyloxy, benzoyloxy, mesyloxy, bezenesul-fonyloxy or tosyloxy,



(IV) in the presence of a catalyst of the formula  $M^{n+}(R^1SO_3^-)_n$ , wherein  $M^{n+}$  is a silver, copper, gallium, hafnium or rare earth metal cation, n is the valence of the cation  $M^{n+}$ , and R<sub>1</sub> is fluorine, C<sub>1-8</sub>-perfluoroalkyl or perfluoroaryl, and, if required, cyclizing any 3-phytyl-2,5,6-trimethylhydroquinone-1-acetate or a double bond isomer thereof obtained as an intermediate reaction product, to produce  $\alpha$ -tocopheryl acetate. In the catalyst  $M^{n+}$  is preferably Ag<sup>+</sup>, Cu<sup>+</sup>, Ga<sup>3+</sup>, Sc<sup>3+</sup>, Lu<sup>3+</sup>, Ho<sup>3+</sup>, Tm<sup>3+</sup>, Yb<sup>3+</sup> or Hf<sup>4+</sup>.